FREE SOCIETY

ENTERED AT SAN FRANCISCO POSTOFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism: Holding that Equality of Opportunity alone Constitutes Liberty; that in the Absence of Monopoly Price and Competition Cannot Exist, and that Communism is an Inevitable Consequence.

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A LOOK INTO THE GULF.

When I see a workingman with mouths to feed,
Up, day after day, in the dark before the dawn,
And coming home, night after night, through the dusk,
Swinging forward like some fierce silent animal,
I see a man doomed to roll a huge stone up an endless steep.
He strains it onward inch by stubborn inch,
Crouched always in the shadow of the rock . . . .
See where he crouches, twisted, cramped, misshapen!
He lifts for their life:
The veins knot and darken—
Blood surges into his face . . . .
Now he loses—now he wins—
Now he loses—loses—(God of my soul!)
He digs his feet into the earth—
There's a moment of terrific effort . . . .
Will the huge stone break his hold,
And crush him as it plunges to the gulf?

—Edwin Markham.

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THE LAW OF SELF-DEFENSE.

In many cases we allow a man to proceed independently of law, as the natives do in savage lands. If a man can substantiate in any way the claim that he acts in defense of his person, his home, or his family, he can do anything he chooses, even to the extent of committing murder, and the law in its ordinary application cannot effect him. The individual in such a case is left entirely to his own judgment as to what he should do, how far he should go and where he should stop. He is a law unto himself; he tries his own case on the spot, and is judge, jury, and executioner all in one. But why should he not be permitted to go quite as far in the same direction where the question involved is one of far less importance and only refers to some ordinary matter? It is a curious fact that when a man falls into serious difficulty and really needs help, he gets none at all from the government or the State. After the trouble is all over, and the man gets killed, or perhaps he kills somebody, the State, with its officers, steps in and takes a hand in the affair. Is that not the way that the State usually protects its citizens? People who want protection which can be depended on must protect themselves—and they must, besides, pay the bills of those who ought to protect them, but who do not.

The State is like the dog in the manger, it will neither protect us nor permit us to protect ourselves. In reality self-protection is illegal and against the theory of the State, because the State assumes to monopolize that business itself. When a man protects himself, he usually violates the law. However, the court or the jury generally winks at such violations, from motives of expediency. It is a very common thing for the State to connive at what it would not openly approve.

A serious question in this connection is this: How far may any man go in the way of wrong-doing, and still be allowed to excuse himself on the plea of necessity or self-defense? Can there ever be any necessity, or even any excuse, for a man's doing a wrong act at any time? Or is an act that is wrong at one time not wrong at another time? Can a man properly kill his fellow man because he apprehends danger? The practice goes so far now that a man may be guilty of murder, in defense of his property, and still he shall not be deemed to have committed any offense. In all such instances, he sits upon his own case, and decides himself what ought to be done. He need not wait until he has suffered some harm to himself or his property. If he even feels himself in danger in any way, or merely says he felt in danger, he is held to be justified in committing murder, the worst crime known to our laws. The law itself may not read that way, but the practice does. If he happens to detect some one in the act of stealing, or acting as if he meditated a burglary, and he shoots him on sight, that usually ends the matter, while if the same thing were done under other circumstances, he would likely be hanged for his crime. So the State commits crime after crime, merely to protect itself—it murders, robs, imprisons, enslaves, kidnaps—and yet it offers no plea in justification, except its own comfort and protection! But deliberate killing or deliberate robbing is a crime, no matter by whom it is committed, nor under what circumstances the crime may be perpetrated. The power to forgive sins has not been granted by God even to the State. God does not deal in indulgences.

Consider for a moment the pleas made and the motives admitted by those acting in the name of the State. What motive has an officer of the State for imprisoning a man when he has done something that is pronounced wrong? Usually the motive is one merely of protection! But is that not carrying "personal aid and comfort" rather too far? Putting a man in prison, not for what he has done, but what we are afraid he may do, and for no other reason than that we are afraid of him, is hardly the proper thing. But if government officers can put people in prison or hang them merely because they have done something that is called wrong, or because it is feared that they will do something wrong, why shall not individuals have the same privilege? It must not be forgotten that generally it is either cowardice or selfishness that prompts officers to do what they do in the name of the State. They fear that a man may kill somebody, or perhaps that he has killed somebody, and so they overpower him and finally knock him on the head or strangle him in some way—as if one murder could be made to cancel another murder that had been perpetrated. What can be more villainous than to punish a man, or in other words, to cause him pain and anguish in some way, simply because we are afraid of him? Yes, it is fear, slavish fear that fills our jails, our prisons, our madhouses. Usually it is nothing but cowardice that leads to the punishment of criminals after conviction. It is well known that the State, when some wrong has been committed, is in no better condition to furnish a remedy than any individual would be under the same circumstances, but it goes on to punish, ostensibly to prevent what might happen in the future!

Another reason or excuse given by the State, or rather by men who act in the name of the State, for punishing people as it does, is that the State has been offended! But what a fiction, what a fraud that is! A man steals a coat. That offends the State, they say. But who is the State that it is so badly offended? Where does he live and what does he do! People delight to talk about the majesty of the State, as if the State was not made of poor, cheap clay like the rest of us.

Another reason, and a stronger one, for the State's punishing people, is because it wants a victim, a sacrifice. The State is a regular Moloch and must have sacrifices made and ceremonies performed in its honor. The State, like the gods of old, must be appeased in some way, when it is offended. The best illustration of how reasonably the law operates, is to be seen in the working of military law. A man deserts and is finally caught and shot. How does this mend matters? Surely no good is done to the deserter, because he is dead, and no good is done to the army, because it has one able-bodied soldier less. In such a case, where does the good come in? I really do not see. It is one of the many cases of deliberate murder by law, without the least sign of an excuse or justification for the deed after it is done.

Finally, if a man can commit a crime merely to save himself or his property, he ought to be permitted to do the same thing in all cases where any advantage is to be gained by his taking such a course. That principle is allowed in ordinary business affairs. A man in business avails himself of all the privileges at his command, whether they are just or unjust. Every man gets all he can, and he pays no attention to the self-evident fact that what he gets somebody else is prevented from getting. Men usually do not care how many other men become paupers, if they themselves only become rich. Our whole doctrine of riches and the practice we follow in securing them is based on the principles of robbery and conquest and on the violation of the rights of other men. It will be noticed that there is very much in common between the way riches are acquired and the way the affairs of the State are managed.—From "Life Without a Master," by J. Wilson, Ph. D., Newark, N. Y.

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JAMES F. MORTON IN ST. LOUIS, MO.

It must certainly be termed carelessness on the part of comrades in cities in which Comrade Morton has lectured, not to send a brief report to Free Society about the propaganda he is carrying on. Surely, Comrade Morton's work is worth mentioning. It is a sad fact that the majority of the German comrades care little or nothing for agitation in the English language, though it is of far greater importance in this country than the propaganda in any other tongue. The reasons are probably these: Being only partly acquainted with the English language, they neither dare nor care to invade the English element, and English meetings *without beer*, as a rule, are a holy terror to most of them. I am neither a temperance man, nor an enemy to Gambrinus, but I am convinced by experience that beer and propaganda must be kept strictly separate. The beer-table-propaganda has created a certain class of Anarchists which are a disgrace and a hindrance to the noble idea and propaganda carried on by earnest and good workers, one of whom is James F. Morton. He lectured in St. Louis before the Street Range Workers, Metal Trades Council, Central Trades and Labor Union, Debating Club, International Association of Machinists, Painters and Decorators, Architectural Iron Workers, and twice before the Bellamy Club. Most meetings were well attended. A farewell entertainment arranged by the Debating Club was the close of two weeks' good work.

CARL NOLD.

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Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well disposed are daily made the agents of injustice.—Thoreau.

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For Chicago.

A grand ball will be given by the International Workingmen's Group for the benefit of the Jewish weekly, Freie Arbeiter-Stimme and Free Society, March 3, 8 p. m., at the Lessing's Club House, 447 W. Tailor St.

Admission 25 cents. Tickets can be secured from the undersigned.

All friends of our cause are cordially invited.

222 DeKoven St. CHAS. KLEINMAN, Sec.

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Anarchy.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal: absolute individual liberty.—Century Dictionary.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

"It is a well-known fact," says Watson Heston, the cartoonist of the Truth Seeker, "that American womanhood, outside of Mormondom, is trying to keep Roberts out of Congress." Nothing but American hypocrisy kept Roberts out of Congress, Mr. Heston. Among those who most zealously worked against Roberts' seating were well-known libertines, as it is rumored, and among those who signed the petition are thousands as much in marital slavery as Roberts' wives. Once the American women become conscious of their womanhood, or personality, they will reject State and Church interference in their love affairs and attend to their own business. If "American womanhood" is going to exclude all members of Congress who indulge in "illegal" sex relations, I fear very few will remain.

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Russia's czar has an income of $1,000 per hour, the sultan $850, the emperor of Austria $500, the kaiser $450, the king of Italy $330, Queen Victoria the same, the French president $250, the king of the Belgians $85, and the president of the United States $7.50 per hour. Of course Mr. McKinley's "wages" are a little low as compared with those of the Russian czar, but the peculiarity of it is that the American presidents usually accumulate more "wealth" during their four years' "service" than the European rulers during their whole life-time. But insignificant is the robbery of the European parasites, called czars, emperors and kings, in comparison with the American vampires, such as Rockefeller, whose income is $4,550 per hour!

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When Luccheni assassinated the empress of Austria, the daily press designated all Anarchists as "wild beasts of society" that "ought to be exterminated from the face of the globe," but the assassin of the politician Goebel of Kentucky is a "loyal Republican" and "the Republican party is not responsible for the assassination." Of course these scribes are aware that the Anarchists are opposed to the whole game of plundering the people while the Republicans and Democrats are simply rivals in the game. That's the difference.

A. I.

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BIRDS OF A FEATHER, FLOCK TOGETHER!

It takes a strong stimulant to arouse my lethargic feelings, so as to express my opinion publicly, and such a stimulant is usually furnished by a lively discussion with comrades or the nonsensical sophistry of so-called Anarchists. William Holmes' criticism on S. D. in defense of Henry Cohen is nothing but sophistry and so I cannot resist expressing myself. He says: "Why a person cannot be a good Anarchist because he practises law is beyond my comprehension."

It is a rather damaging admission on the part of Holmes not to see the inconsistency. Perhaps he has compromised already so much with the existing moral code that he is unable to reason as an Anarchist, i. e., logically. Whatever may be said of Anarchism and Anarchists, the charge cannot be made that Anarchism compromises with prevailing institutions, or that Anarchy can be achieved by palliatives. I have never yet heard of an Anarchist who desired an Anarchist jury, judge or justice. Anarchism repudiates all laws and lawmakers and its interpreters—lawyers! Comrade A. I. very pertinently says that a man who refuses to serve on a jury does more for freedom than one who helps judging! What right has one man to judge over another? Besides, Holmes' theory is utterly untenable. Anarchist judges and justices are an impossibility, at least their office would be of short duration, unless they abandon all their principles; for "the powers that be" would soon remove "his honor," or, what is more likely, corrupt him by bribery, as all power tends to corruption and compromise.

I ask Comrade Holmes, how often his honest and sincere desire to obtain justice in the law courts for the wage workers was crowned with success? Or is he already so much of a lawyer that he does not see the farce of our entire judicial practises as carried on in the United States? And I deny the statement that Anarchists *frequently* appeal to the law; if they do, it is a matter of compulsion. *True* Anarchists will settle differences more justly among themselves.

Does not almost every lawyer accept a case even if he knows that his client is wrong, and than tries to prove in court he is right? The claim that Comrade Holmes never prosecuted is a rather poor excuse.

I do not think anybody would have criticized or blamed Mr. Cohen very much had he come out frankly and said: "I expect to make an easier living by becoming a lawyer and, consistent or not, I intend to make a living the easiest way I can." That would have been candid and honest—a point in his favor. But the very fact that he answered S. D. with abuse and insults, shows conclusively that S. D.'s remarks went straight home. "The galled jade winces."

I cannot conceive of a lawyer being an Anarchist when Anarchism repudiates all laws and government. At any rate, if he should persist upholding Anarchist principles, he would find his profession unprofitable.

I hope Free Society will continue to oppose all compromises without malice or favor and fearlessly expose all hypocrisy. I have never yet detected an unjust attack in Free Society because some one differed with the opinion of the publishers. But I look always with suspicion upon those who are Anarchists among Anarchists and judges among judges, etc.

R. Streit.

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THE NIGHT BELL.

(Translated from German by M. S. Mandell.)

Ter-rer-rer-rer-rer!

Thus rang the night bell. The doctor awoke, raised his head from the pillow, sat up in bed, rubbed his eyes and yawned.

"Always disturbed from the best of sleep; d—! I wonder if the station master's wife has dreamed again that her little boy has contracted the diptheria, or is somebody there?"

Sullenly he wrapped himself in his night robe, and having walked up to the window, he opened it and asked:

"Who's there?"

"Doctor, please call at our house at once—William Els—the lady of the house—Mrs. Field—!"

"Ah! The Fieldings are calling— Right away!"

"A good patient. When she is calling me in the middle of the night, there is money in it—she does not live so far away—and yet, it is not so very pleasant to leave a warm bed in the middle of the night in winter, when everything around is quiet, and when everybody else is fast asleep."

But not everybody was fast asleep. When the doctor entered his office a bright fire was burning there. On a chair lay his fur coat, his hat, his gloves and all the belongings of his winter wear, ready to be put on. Invitingly placed on the table was a bottle of cognac and a glass. This was placed there by a woman, who sat at the table in a hastily donned wrapper, with loose hair and sleepy eyes. She was rather young and delicate, with large teeth which were plainly seen through the open side gash in the place of a mouth, and her protruding cheek bones were an uninviting addition to her general ugliness.

"Why are you not asleep, Miss Elsie?" asked the doctor.

"I have asked you more than once not to get up when you hear the night bell. I can do without your assistance."

"No doctor, don't say that. I do it, believe me, because it gives me pleasure."

While saying this she gazed at the doctor with a look full of devotion and faithfulness. The doctor drank his cognac, then put his fur coat on. Miss Elsie helped him with his overcoat; she also handed him his gloves, and as he took them from her he pressed her hand lightly, and made for the door.

Miss Elsie escorted him with the following words: "Please doctor, button your coat so that you may not catch cold."

"Of course I will, you may rest assured," said the doctor. "Remain where you are, I shall lock the door myself."

"No, no, no! doctor; it is not hard to walk a little."

She escorted him to the door which led into the street, and once more warned him to take good care of himself. When he descended the stile she shut the door and turned the key.

"Whew!" The doctor drew his breath. The sidewalk was covered with snow. The air was cold and motionless; the breathing was fresh and reviving, and above in the heavens the glittering flashing stars were shining. The doctor followed his caller, who carried in his hand a lantern.

"Elsie is a good girl," thought the doctor. "She looks after me faithfully. She may be trusted with many more serious responsibilities—good Elsie!"

She is not good looking, to be sure. But why does he want her good looks? He has no serious intentions.

"A place for everything and everything in its place, is a proverb suited to Elsie," said the doctor. "When this, that or the other thing is wanted, it can easily be found—nice, clean and inviting, and how she rejoices in my well-being!"

That he is her idol, and that she worships the ground he walks on, can plainly be seen. And how it pleases her to wait upon him! The doctor was more than pleased by such faithfulness in a woman, although she was ugly.

In about two hours, the doctor started for home. The night was dark as before; the cold was more intense, and it was now snowing. He walked with heavy steps. At last he arrived home. He unlocked the door. In the hall a small light was burning. Elsie was ready to comfort the doctor. When he opened the door which led to his dinning room, the pleasant warmth welcomed him, and he at once felt that he was at home.

On the table was a tea kettle, on a stand, from under which a blue flame issued. Elsie had her dress and her hair arranged in more becoming manner. She sat on a rocker near the sparkling fire place, which added much to the comfort of the room, and awaited the doctor's return. Thus she had waited for two long hours.

Now she jumped to her feet full of joy, and ready to assist him in taking off his street garb, and placing the garments where they belong. After this task had been accomplished, she handed him his slippers and served him with a hot punch.

While drinking his punch, he told her all about the "case" he attended. She listened attentively, and joyfully devoured every word he uttered, at the same time watching him closely. And now for the first time it occurred to him that an ugly woman can love, feel, and make as good a wife as a good looking one, and perhaps better.

And after all, she was not so bad looking that evening. Is it possible to call a woman bad looking who possesses a pair of mild, pleading eyes, in which the flame of love is burning ardent and true? He emptied his glass of punch and prepared to retire again for the night. Elsie ran quickly and arranged the bed for his comfort, and as he entered his bed chamber, Elsie, on finishing her work, stepped to the door and bade him good night. He stretched out his hand for a friendly adieu. They looked at each other—looked—looked—and Elsie began to feel the doctor's arm around her waist.

* * * * * * The world nodded its head and wondered why he selected the homeliest girl he could find, after his wife died, for was she not beautiful, cultured and devoted? And it was whispered over the afternoon tea, that he intentionally selected Elsie because he wished to avoid being talked about.

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Ter-rer-rer-rer-rer.

The night bell again. The doctor is getting up and out of bed very carefully, so as not to disturb his better half. She will scold—careful—careful. He is looking for his clothes—careful. He goes out and locks the door from the outside—careful—careful. Elsie hates to be disturbed from her sleep.

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DEMOCRACY PRODUCES COWARDS.

It is a singular fact, that the freer a nation becomes, the more utterly democratic the form of its institutions, this outside agitation, this pressure of public opinion to direct political action, becomes more and more necessary. The general judgment is, that the freest possible government produces the freest possible men and women—the most individual, the least servile to the judgment of others. But a moment's reflection will show any man that this is an unreasonable expectation, and that, on the contrary, entire equality and freedom in political forms almost inevitably tend to make the individual subside into the mass, and loose his identity in the general whole. Suppose we stood in England tonight. There is the nobility, and here is the Church. There is the trading-class, and here is the literary. A broad gulf separates the four; and provided a member of either can conciliate his own section, he can afford, in a very large measure, to

despise the judgment of the other three. He has, to some extent, a refuge and a breakwater against the tyranny of what we call public opinion. But in a country like ours, of absolute democratic equality, public opinion is not only omnipotent, it is omnipresent. There is no refuge from its tyranny; there is no hiding from its reach; and the result is, that if you take the old Greek lantern, and go about to seek among a hundred, you will find not one single American who really has not something to gain or lose in his ambition, his social life, or his business, from the good opinion and the votes of those about him. And the consequence is, that,—instead of being a mass of individuals, each one fearlessly blurting out his own convictions,—as a nation, compared with other nations, we are a mass of cowards. More than any other people, we are afraid of each other.

If you were a caucus tonight, Democratic or Republican, and I were your orator, none of you could get beyond the necessary and timid limitations of party. You would not only demand, you would not allow me to utter, one word of what you really thought, and what I thought. You would demand of me—and my value as a caucus speaker would depend entirely on the adroitness and vigilance with which I met the demand—that I should not utter one single word which would compromise the vote of next week. That is politics; so with the press. Seemingly independent, and sometimes really so, the press can afford only to mount the cresting wave, not go beyond it. The editor might as well shoot his reader with a bullet as with a new idea. He must hit the exact line of the opinion of the day. I am not finding fault with him; I am only describing him. Some three years ago I took to one of the freest of the Boston journals a letter, and by appropriate consideration induced its editor to print it. And as we glanced along its contents, and came to the concluding statement, he said, "Couldn't you omit that?" I said, "No; I wrote it for that; it is the gist of the statement." "Well," said he, "it is true; there is not a boy in the streets that does not know it is true; but I wish you could omit it."

I insisted; and the next morning, fairly and justly, he printed the whole. Side by side he put an article of his own, in which he said, "We copy in the next column an article from Mr. Phillips, and we only regret the absurd and unfounded statement with which he concludes it." He had kept his promise by printing the article; he saved his reputation by printing the comment. And that, again, is the inevitable the essential limitation of the press in a republican community. Our institutions, floating unanchored on the shifting surface of popular opinion, cannot afford to hold back, or to draw forward, a hated question, and compel a reluctant public to look at it and to consider it. Hence, as you see at once, the moment a large issue, twenty years ahead of its age, presents itself to the consideration of an empire or of a republic, just in proportion to the freedom of its institutions is the necessity of a platform outside of the press, of politics, and of its church, whereon stand men with no candidate no elect, with no plan to carry, with no reputation tostake, with no object but the truth, no purpose but to tear the question open and let the light through it. So much in explanation of a word infinitely hated—agitation and agitators—but an element which the progress of modern government has developed more and more every day.—Wendell Phillips.

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EFFORTS MADE TO FREE COMRADE ALEXANDER BERKMAN.

In a recent convention of Jewish Anarchists in New York, a committee was chosen to find means and ways to have comrade Alexander Berkman released from imprisonment, which threatens to destroy his eyesight and health entirely; and the following is taken from the minutes of the Eleventh Annual Convention of the United Mine Workers of America:

Mr. Hunter asked leave at this time to introduce the resolution he had referred to some time previously. The resolution was read by Delegate Hefti and was as follows:

"To the Representatives of the Eleventh Annual Convention of the U. M. W. of America:

"Whereas, One Alexander Berkman was, in the year 1892, sentenced to a term of twenty-two years in the penitentiary of western Pennsylvania, and is now therein confined, for the alleged crime of assaulting one H. C. Frick, managing director of the steel works at Homestead, Pa., and

"Whereas, We believe that the sentence of twenty-two years given to Alexander Berkman was excessive and out of proportion to the alleged crime said to have been committed by said Alexander Berkman; and

"Whereas, We believe that the punishment inflicted was largely due to the inflamed minds and passions of the community at the time of said trial, and also due in a large measure to vindictive prosecution; and

"Whereas, We believe that the ends of justice have been more than satisfied with the term of eight years' imprisonment already borne by Alexander Berkman: and

"Whereas, That, notwithstanding that the behavior of said Alexander Berkman has been exceptionally good during the years of his imprisonment; and

"Whereas, It has come to our knowledge from reliable sources that he is being confined most of the time in an almost dark cell, and if such be true the tendency of such punishment is calculated to lead to total blindness; therefore be it

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this convention that the incoming National officials and our National Executive Board members be hereby authorized by this convention to immediately petition his excellecy, the governor of the State of Pennsylvania, and the State Board of Pardons for the immediate pardoning and release of said Alexander Berkman; be it further

"Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be published in the Journal of the United Mine Workers of America and also in the great press of our nation.

"(Signed.)

"John M. Hunter,
"J. G. McLaughlin,
"Jos. Corna,
"Wm. Hefti."

It was moved that the resolution be adopted as read. Motion seconded.

Mr. Hunter—The matter referred to is of too recent date for me to consume much of your time in telling you of the incidents that led up to the conviction and imprisonment of Alexander Berkman in the western Pennsylvania penitentiary. I need not remind you this morning of how the whole nation was stirred from center to circumference over the dastardly, cowardly act of the Pinkertons, not only for the conviction of Alexander Berkman, but of the best men in the United States who dared stand up for their rights. I want this convention to-day, by a unanimous vote, to go on record, no matter whether it is the case of Alexander Berkman or some other man who sacrifices his liberty, who is willing to endure the hardships of a trial and ignominy heaped upon him by the money power of this nation dealing in this manner with any man who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow. I wish I had time to tell you of what we have had to endure in our State. When anything is said against the coal operators they immediately fly to the federal courts and ask for an injunction, and the federal courts seem always ready, eager and willing to grant the injunction. But God have mercy on the poor miners! You have only one injunction and that is the muzzle of a Winchester. I am sorry to say that I believe to-day the judicial ermine of this country is stained from its hem to its collar, and I want you to go on record here to-day by taking immediate action, and then by presenting a petition to his excellency, the Governor of Pennsylvania, and to the Board of Pardons of that for the immediate release of our brother, Alexander Berkman.

Mr. McLaughlin—I wish to add a few words to those of Brother Hunter. We workingmen have had our eyes opened since the Homestead strike regarding the true character of the so-called plutocratic government of the United States. It has ever been that the federal courts of our country, those who were hired by the people, the servants of the people, to deal out justice to all, have become, instead, courts of injustice and wrong. The cowardly murderers who shot down the anthracite miners in Pennsylvania were allowed to go free, but innocent men like Alexander Berkman were sentenced to twenty-two years in prison in Pennsylvania. John P. Reese, simply for expressing his opinion, was Ft. Scott, yet men who shot other men in the backs were allowed to go free, and all the power of the United States government was brought to bear to have those cowardly deputies in Pennsylvania discharged. I need say no more, only to ask you to pass this resolution unanimously.

The resolution was adopted by a unanimous vote of the convention.

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The law will never make men free; it is men who have got to make the law free.—Thoreau.

MADE A DISCOVERY.

I have made a discovery. I have discovered that "reincarnation" is a fact in nature. Of course this idea has been promulgated for ages in the East, moreover, has been adopted by Theosophists in the West, so that as a dogmatic opinion, or a philosophical theory, there is nothing new about it. But it has fallen to the lot of "yours truly" to discover the workings of the law and the proof which will place "reincarnation" in the category of scientific facts.

Now, not to take up time unnecessarily with the preamble, I will proceed to my "proof." First, let me remind the reader of the oft-repeated saying, "History repeats itself." Now my discovery consists of the fact that "history" being a continuous narrative of events, cannot be interpreted correctly apart from the living personalities, the men and the women, who have performed the acts, which, when performed, constitute the events, which being narrated, constitute the history. It is true, therefore, not that history repeats itself, but that those who perform the particular acts constituting the events which we call "history" have repeated themselves. An act cannot repeat itself. It is the actor who repeats himself. This is my discovery; and hence I have proved the truth of "reincarnation."

But the reader will want to know how I came to make so great a discovery. I do not know why I should be chosen out of all the mass of men to herald this grand truth to the scientific world; but, as no theory is of much value unless it can be given demonstration admitting of no other reasonable hypothesis, I proceed to a narration of my facts, hoping posterity will honor me, though I realize this materialistic age will leave me, as the saviors of society have ever been left, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

Two thousand years ago Plato said he was simply a "midwife," assisting at the birth of a great idea. Now, that is my position exactly. And as there exists always, more or less pain intimately associated with "*labor*," the reader must not feel surprised if he already has that "*tired feeling*." But please do not give way to it Shake off the lethargy. Take your Bible and read it now that you have the key by which to interpret the hitherto hidden mysteries of "*Revelation*." The Bible is a *history*. The people living today are the reincarnated spirits of those who lived in the days of David and Solomon. What they are doing to Roberts in shutting him out of the United States Congress, is a repetition of the same acts performed by those same individuals so long ago. History repeats itself only in the way that those who have done certain narratedthings come again in the flesh and do the same identical things again. They have debarred Roberts from Congress for polygamy. They kept Solomon out of the temple for the same reason.

If the intelligent reader will only take the "holy" Bible in one hand and the San Francisco Examiner in the other, and read about the Robert's case as narrated firstly in the "dear old book," and secondly in the Examiner issue of January 25 in the year of our Lord 1900, he will not fail to see how "history repeats itself," and, besides, he will have scientific proof of reincarnation.

A few difficulties will present themselves. For instance, why is the hero of the story called Roberts? Why was he formerly called Solomon? The difficulty is removed when you remember that a "rose by any other name smells just as sweet." Another difficulty, which completely staggered my mind for a time, lies in the fact that Solomon, alias Roberts, has only three wives today, whereas, if reincarnation be true and history repeats itself, why is it said that he had in the ancient time "seven hundred wives (princesses), and three hundred concubines"? (See I Kings, xi: 3.) The mystery was solved when a spirit voice whispered in my ear: "It is not a question of mathematical accuracy, but simply a matter of 'Divine Revelation' and history interpreted in the clear light of the scientific truth of reincarnation."

One more thought. I may not be quite correct as to thinking Roberts is Solomon, or Solomon Roberts. You see, "there are others." For instance the episode of Roberts may be a repetition of the life of Rehoboam who loved Maachah, the daughter of Absalom, above all his wives and concubines: "For he took eighteen wives, and three score concubines; and begat twenty-eight sons, and three score daughters." (See II Chronicles, xi: 21.) May be this is Roberts? Give him time. Besides, when Solomon died, the sacred record has it that he "slept with his fathers." It is not said that he did not do any sleeping with anybody else. I say give him time.

Wallace E. Nevill.

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ONE LITTLE MISTAKE.

A thing which seldom occurs in the typography of Free Society, but I am going to turn it to account by illustrating more fully what I meant. I once heard Col. Kelso say that when cattle stampeded from their corralls, the herders did not attempt to drive them back, but got upon their horses and riding ahead, led them back by a circuitous route. For several generations the people have been stampeding from the various institutions in which they have been penned. But being somewhat more observing than cattle, their herders could not so easily lead them back into the old pens; so new ones have been constructed in which the same principle has been involved, but the form differing from the old. Thus we have liberal Christianity, and republican governments. Thus, where I said that governments were the same in fact if not in form, the typo made me say "if not in power," and that was the little mistake. LOIS WAISBROOKER.

INSPIRED WITH HOPE.

Dear comrades,—While I am writing I will tell of some "glimmerings of the dawn" in the backwoods of California.

The Tulare County Times, published at Visalia, Calif., is publishing Olive Schreiner's masterpiece of fiction in serial form. The editor calls attention to it in two places containing the first instalment. The story is strongly rationalistic. It is sold in book form by the publishers of Lucifer and many other liberal book stores.

In the same paper appears a statement from a correspondent to the effect that nobody in his neighborhood is paying the least attention to the "wide-tire law." He winds up by saying that it seems the law will be a dead letter by common consent.

A young married woman here, upon learning that I was an Anarchist and "free lover," asked me many questions about it and then inquired for literature on the subject. She is now reading Comrade Gillie's "Pseudo Morals of Pious Fanatics," while her husband is reading "Victoria Woodhull and Her Social Freedom," by Austin Kent.

The world is moving. * * *

CARNEGIE.

The daily papers published without comment a lecture held by A. Carnegie. Among other things he said:

"Poverty is happiness. Poverty is a necessity and without the same, life would not be worth living. Poverty is progress and without it no artist, no inventor nor philanthropists could exist." Mr. Carnegie ought to have added: "Were it not for poverty, no government, no blood-sucker nor parasite could exist."

But the good Samaritan A. Carnegie, the multi-millionaire, was not anxious to tell the truth to a Bible class audience. Now, if it were really true that poverty is happiness, why does he not get rid of all his stolen wealth and live in poverty? Certainly, Carnegie knew beforehand that his audience would not dare to ask him any such question and so he talked rot.

Of course he would not have said any such trash to an Anarchist audience—we know better; let us, therefore, spread our doctrines among our fellow slaves that they may learn to see how they are deceived and robbed on behalf of the capitalistic hydra, and that it depends on none others but themselves to seize the ways and means which will enable them to live comfortably and happy.

New York, N. Y. E. MARTINA.

CLIPPINGS.

In the beginning of the war in the Philippines it was current report that Aguinaldo had only between 28,000 and 30,000 men in his army. We have kept tab on Otis' reports of the heavy losses of the enemy, and they foot up 42,000, or 12,000 more than opposed him, and, in spite of his 60,000 men, the Filipinos are still occupying as much ground as they did when the war began.—Kansan.

One might as well talk of sober drunkenness as of civilized warfare.—Sir Wilfrid Dawson.

The cost of the inglorious and wicked war in the Philippines would have redeemed every acre of arid land in California—enough territory to maintain 15,000,000 people in comfort. And that kind of "expansion" would have made the close of the nineteenth century glorious in history. What fools these mortals be—when they are not knaves.—The Star.

"Who fights for England fights for God," sings Alfred Austin, "poet laureate." If this be true the "Almighty" was not attending to business at Saratogo, Trenton, Stony Point, Yorktown, Lundy' Lane, and New Orleans, to say nothing of Majuba Hill, Tugela River, Modder River, and Colenso. The indications are that Alfred is a paid attorney.—Omaha Herald.

The lickspittle press caricatures the Boers because they are a plain people. Well, our fathers were simple farmers, hunters, woodsmen and artisans. Yet they wrought greatly for liberty—and the land was full of men in their day—not purse-proud fools and crawling, cringing toadies.—The Star.

To unreasonable tenants on the William Waldorf Astor property, who might be disposed to grumble at the recent advance in rents, it should only be necessary to say that Mr. Astor has recently been subjected to a heavy expense in his contribution to fit out abattery of quick-firing guns for the destruction of the Boers.—Toledo News.

Three hundred thousand women in London lead lives of shame in order to escape the pangs of hunger. Thousands of men, thousands of children in that great capital die yearly from lack of decent food. An idle and extravagant aristocracy lives in gorgeous luxury within rifleshot of unspeakable woe and want. No wonder the Boers would rather die like men with guns in their hands and the free sky above their heads than to be "civilized" after the London model.—The Star.

The Letter-Box.

D. M., Boston, Mass.—We were much pleased to hear that the comrades are to bring about a raffle in order to raise a fund for the purpose of enabling us to make Free Society an eight page weekly. We are as anxious to enlarge the paper as anyone of our readers can be, but being everlastingly hampered by the lack of means we did not think it advisable to do so. Greetings.

F. G., Oshkosh, Wis.—Very well; we would not be Anarchists if we were "intolerant toward the ideas of others and believed in persecuting those who differ with us"; but we are and must be intolerant when it is suggested to compromise for the sake of gaining adherence and respectability. A thousand thoroughbred Anarchists will do more to bring about greater freedom than ten thousand half-breeds. A man who proposes to compromise with the S. L. P. "for the sake of a greater number," may be honest and sincere, but he is surely a poor Anarchist. Pamphlets were sent.

C. L., Chicago.—If you read the paragraph again, you will find that I did not advocate "war and bloodshed." I simply referred to the bloodshed and atrocities brought about by ignorance, capitalism and government. Will you inform me where and when slaves have obtained freedom by peaceful methods?

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